

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING JIMMY E. STEELE III FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 14, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jimmy E. Steele III, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 167, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jimmy has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jimmy has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Due to Jimmy's hard work and leadership, the Winston R-VI school baseball field now proudly displays a new flag pole and American Flag.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jimmy E. Steele III for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 14, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to your attention the outstanding work and commitment of the Child Welfare League of America, CWLA. This organization acts on the premise that every child is valuable and has something to contribute to society. They believe that our children are entitled to nurturance, protection, and the chance to develop to his or her full human potential.

The CWLA testified before the Human Resources Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee on May 23, 2006 to review proposals to improve child protective services, all in an effort to highlight the importance of the child welfare system in ensuring that children and families are afforded the necessary resources and services available.

Although the family and the child welfare system have specific responsibilities, we all know that society as a whole shares the responsibility for promoting healthy human growth and development.

I am submitting at this time part I of the testimony given by CWLA and hope that you will find it informative.

Hello, I am Linda Spears, Vice President of Corporate Communications and Development of the Child Welfare League of America, CWLA. I am honored to submit comments on behalf of CWLA, and our nearly 900 public and private nonprofit, child-serving

member agencies this afternoon. The attention given by the Human Resources Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee focusing on the child protective services system and the reauthorization of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families, PSSSF, program further shows the intent to ensure that our children have the appropriate resources and services available to them.

CWLA believes that as a country we must confirm our commitment to prevent child abuse and neglect and to support children who have been abused and neglected. We support strengthened partnerships between federal, state, and local governments and providers in the nonprofit and charitable communities in order to do a better job of protecting our nation's children.

IMPROVING THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

In 2004, an estimated 3 million children were reported as abused or neglected and received an assessment or screening to determine whether or not there was evidence of abuse or neglect. Approximately 872,000 children were substantiated as abused or neglected. These numbers are similar to previous years. Another consistent pattern is that more than sixty percent of child victims were victims of neglect, while eighteen percent were physically abused and ten percent were sexually abused. Thirty percent of victims were age 3 or younger. We also know that 1,490 children died from child abuse in 2004. Overall eighty-three percent of the time a parent or parents were involved in the abuse. Another consistent statistic from year to year is that of the children who have been substantiated as abused or neglected, nearly 40 percent do not receive follow up services.

The foundation on which child protective services, CPS, is established and what should always be the first goal of any CPS response is keeping children safe from child abuse and neglect. The CPS response begins with the assessment of reports of child abuse and neglect. If CPS determines the child is at risk of abuse and neglect or has been abused or neglected, CPS should ensure the child and his or her family receive services and supports from the public child protection agency and the community.

CWLA believes the best ways to ensure children are safe from all forms of maltreatment are comprehensive, community-based approaches to protecting children and supporting and strengthening families. Public and private agencies, in collaboration with individual citizens and community entities, can prevent and remedy child maltreatment, achieve child safety, and promote child and family well-being.

Child protective service, CPS, systems in the fifty states are funded by a variety of sources. In fact, funding goes beyond the two programs specifically targeted for today's hearing, the IV-B part 1 and IV-B part 2 programs. Consistently the Social Services Block Grant, SSBG, serves as a major source of funding with thirty-eight states spending \$194 million in SSBG funds in 2004 for child protective services. These funds include some TANF dollars transferred into SSBG. We highlight this because SSBG, which is under the jurisdiction of this subcommittee, is threatened with a potential reduction of \$500 million in the President's proposed FY

2007 budget, a thirty percent reduction in funding that would be devastating to CPS and many other child welfare services. State CPS systems also draw from the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, CAPTA, but funding under the state grants part of that program is limited to \$27 million and has never reached its full authorized funding level.

A CPS system that functions well is one that has a fully staffed and competent workforce. When understaffed and overworked, this system of child protection will fail. CWLA cannot emphasize enough the need for a national child welfare workforce strategy that puts well trained and educated workers in place, keeps caseloads at manageable levels, and provides competent supervision and ongoing training.

It is also important to note that CPS is only one part of the child welfare system and it cannot be viewed in isolation. If the efforts at reunification of a family fail, or the adoption fails, or services are not available for families and children who come into contact with the system, then we may find these very same children entering the system again. Children with a prior history of maltreatment are more likely to experience a recurrence of maltreatment than those who were not prior victims.

THE NEED FOR SERVICES

CWLA's vision for an optimal child welfare system encompasses a continuum of services ranging from prevention of abuse and neglect to permanency and stability for children who experience out of home care. Key ingredients of this system are a family-centered approach, an ample, stable, and highly professional workforce, the availability and targeted application of services to prevent child abuse and neglect, maintaining families when maltreatment has occurred and child safety can be reasonably assured, and achieving permanency and stability for children who must experience foster care. These components are consistent with current research and with federal expectations associated with the Child and Family Service Review process.

Family centered approach

Research in child maltreatment, juvenile justice, children's mental health, and parent education supports the effectiveness of interventions that involve the entire family over those targeting the individual parent or child alone. A family-centered approach engages families in addressing the problems that affect the care of their children. Such engagement has been linked positively to compliance with and completion of case plans.

Stable professional workforce

Effective child welfare services are based on accurate differential assessments and require knowledge of human behavior, the factors underlying child maltreatment, and the way in which both risks and protective factors interact to produce an overall picture of a family's needs. Thus, it is not surprising that child welfare workforce research suggests the need for staff that have formal social work education, especially that obtained through specialized child welfare programs such as those developed through Title IV-E-supported agency-university partnerships. Studies further point to the importance of

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